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ABSTRACT

To fulfill an agreement with the 1992 General Assembly, the Virginia Department of Education conducted a study during the fall and winter of 1992-93 of school divisions' implementation of their Family Life Education (FLE) programs. The program was to provide comprehensive, age-appropriate, and sequential instruction in 10 specified content areas to K-12 students. Data related to nine program objectives were collected through the administration of a survey instrument to school divisions. The survey questions concentrated on: legislative and administrative mandates; instruction designed to promote parental involvement; establishment of goals; autonomy and flexibility; emphasis on abstinence; local option; consistency of administration and teaching; opt-out procedures; and program improvement. One hundred twenty-eight school divisions responded prior to the date the data were compiled and analyzed. This report begins with a review of relevant literature, legislative and regulatory mandates, and Department of Education administrative policies. The main body of the document reproduces the survey and discusses findings relative to each objective. Appendices provide copies of the Code of Virginia, Board of Education Regulations, and Department of Education Policies. (LL)

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ED 362 520

STUDY OF FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN VIRGINIA PUBLIC SCHOOL DIVISIONS

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Virginia Department of Education
Division of Pre- and Early Adolescent Education
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Preface

This study of the Family Life Education (FLE) program in Virginia school divisions was conducted by the Department of Education during the fall and winter of 1992-93. It resulted from an agreement between the General Assembly and the Department of Education in conjunction with the 1992 General Assembly's consideration of House Joint Resolution (HJR) No. 233. While HJR 233 was unsuccessful, the Department of Education agreed to conduct a survey to determine if the FLE program is being implemented by school divisions according to legislative and administrative mandates.

The survey was conducted during the fall of 1992 by a team of Department of Education staff members and outside consultants under the leadership of Dr. Ida J. Hill, Deputy Superintendent for Early Childhood, Pre- and Early Adolescent and Adolescent Education and Dr. Helen R. Stiff, Division Chief, Pre- and Early Adolescent Student Services. The members of the team were:

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STUDY OF FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN VIRGINIA SCHOOL DIVISIONS

Executive Summary

To fulfill an agreement with the 1992 General Assembly, the Department of Education conducted a study during the fall and winter of 1992-93 of school divisions' implementation of their Family Life Education (FLE) programs. The study started with a review of relevant literature, legislative and regulatory mandates, and Department of Education administrative policies. Data related to the nine study objectives were collected through the administration of a survey instrument to school divisions (Appendix B). One hundred twenty-eight school divisions responded to the survey prior to the date the data were compiled and analyzed. The findings were then analyzed and discussed relative to the nine study objectives. Following are abbreviated statements of the study objectives and the discussion of findings related to each.

Legislative and administrative mandates. Eighteen specific mandates (legislation, Board of Education regulations, or Department of Education administrative policy) were identified and investigated through the survey of school divisions.

Based on school divisions' self-reported information:

- 17 mandates are being satisfied by more than 80 percent of the divisions;
- 14 mandates are being satisfied by more than 90 percent of the divisions;
- 89 percent of the school divisions taught family life education content in sex-separated classes; and
- 55 percent of the divisions developed a plan for teaching family life education content in sex-separated classes and announced the plan to the public annually.

Instruction designed to promote parental involvement. It appears that parental involvement in the FLE instruction of their children is not a high priority in many school divisions. Their reports on this aspect of the program can be summarized as follows:

- approximately 2/3 of the divisions are doing something in addition to mandated actions (although typical efforts are limited in scope);
- approximately 1/3 of the divisions are doing nothing extra; and,
- 16 divisions attempt to promote regular parent-child interaction.

Establishment of goals. Some divisions have attempted to provide a better theoretical base for their FLE program by developing a mission statement, program goals, and/or program objectives. School divisions' survey responses indicated that 34 percent had developed a mission statement, 64 percent had developed program goals, and 53 percent had developed program objectives.

Autonomy and flexibility. Based on school divisions' responses to the question, "Did the options provided in the Board of Education's regulations afford sufficient autonomy and flexibility to implement the FLE program according to your local community standards and values?," it is reasonable to conclude that they felt they were given sufficient autonomy and flexibility. Of the 127 divisions responding to this question, 123 (or 96.9%) responded "yes."

Emphasis on abstinence. The survey data indicate that abstinence is being taught as a primary element in the FLE program by a large number of school divisions. When divisions were asked to identify the four instructional topics (out of a list of 14) to which they give the greatest emphasis in their FLE program, abstinence was identified by 78 divisions, the second most frequently mentioned topic.

Local option. School divisions' responses to several questions on the survey provide evidence that the local option is working. For example:

- Given the choice of a state-approved program or developing a local program, 62.5 percent of divisions currently have locally-developed programs.
- Both the K-10 (selected by 86 divisions) and K-12 program options (selected by 40 divisions), appear to be viable.
- 97 percent of divisions felt they were afforded sufficient autonomy and flexibility to implement the FLE program according to their local community standards and values.

Consistency of administration and teaching. Because school divisions appear to be adhering to most FLE mandates, there is some degree of consistency in the most important aspects of program administration. However, many administrative details are handled differently among the school divisions.

Regarding teaching, there appears to be great variety across the state in how FLE is taught. Examples of this variability follow:

- Some divisions teach FLE as a separate unit, while others integrate it into health or partially integrate it into other subjects.
- The primary teaching responsibility for FLE is assigned to a variety of teachers, FLE specialists, and nurses.
- Inservice training for those who have the primary teaching responsibility has been quite variable; therefore, it is likely that their teaching is quite variable.

There is a question of how much consistency in teaching FLE is desirable. It appears that a certain level of "autonomy and flexibility" is desired. The level of variability does not appear to be inconsistent with intent of the Board's regulations.

Opt-out. Opt-out procedures have been defined in more than 95 percent of school divisions. Only eight divisions reported having any complaints from parents regarding pressure not to remove their children from the FLE program. Opt-out appears to be working, as evidenced by divisions' reports that:

- they have adopted opt-out procedures;
- parents are notified of the procedures annually;
- few complaints from parents are being received by divisions; and
- only a small percentage of students (estimated to be 1.7%) currently are opted out of all or part of the FLE program.

Program improvement. School divisions' responses to the survey are at best equivocal regarding continuing program improvement. Some school divisions have exceeded the mandates for FLE in attempts to enhance their programs. The probability that such divisions will effect program improvement should be high. Other divisions are not yet meeting all of the current mandates. Some of the more positive efforts by divisions are:

- developing a mission statement, program goals, and program objectives;
- assessing students' progress on the learner objectives; and
- conducting an evaluation of the FLE program.

As noted earlier, several school divisions did not respond to the survey in time for their data to be included in this report. Information related to non-respondents, as well as information indicating non-compliance with mandates, will be passed on to the Division of Compliance for follow-up.

I. Introduction

The Family Life Education (FLE) Program was funded by the General Assembly during its 1988 session, based on a program plan developed by the Board of Education and the Department of Education, including regulations for the program adopted by the Board of Education. The program, scheduled for implementation by all school division during the 1989-90 school year, was to provide comprehensive, age-appropriate, and sequential instruction in ten specified content areas. The program could cover grades K-10 or K-12, depending upon the desires of the local division, and school divisions were permitted to use state-approved Standards of Learning objectives or develop their own learner objectives.

Each school division was required to appoint a community involvement team (CIT) to assist in the development of the program and to promote community involvement. The regulations for the program were written to assure that parents had an opportunity to review the program annually and opt their children out of all or part of the program.

This study of FLE programs implemented by school divisions in Virginia was conducted by the Department of Education during the fall and winter of 1992-93. The team working on this study and its consultants conducted a review of relevant literature and all legislative and regulatory mandates for the program, as well as administrative policies of the Department of Education. The team then began the development of a survey instrument to be used to obtain information from school divisions about the various aspects of implementation and operation of their FLE programs pertaining to the specific objectives of this study, with a particular focus on the mandates. Several groups and individuals with an interest in this program were asked to provide reactions to a draft of the survey instrument. These groups and individuals included representatives from six school divisions, the Teen Pregnancy Prevention Council of Virginia, the Association of Virginia Planned Parenthood Affiliates, and an interested member of the House of Delegates. The Management Council of the Department of Education also reviewed the survey instrument. Using their reactions, the team finalized the survey instrument and prepared it for distribution to school divisions. The survey instrument was distributed to superintendents via Administrative Supts. Memo. No. 107 dated November 20, 1992. The survey was to be completed and returned by December 18, 1992. By following up with school divisions not responding by the due date, the team was able to get responses from 128 school divisions prior to the date the data were compiled and analyzed.

Specific objectives. The study of local school divisions by the Department of Education was to include, but not be limited to, the following specific objectives:

1. If the program is being implemented according to statute and legislative and administrative mandates,

2. If the instruction is designed to promote parental involvement,

3. If any goals have been established with regard to the above two inquiries,

4. If localities have been afforded sufficient autonomy and flexibility to implement the program according to their own local community standards and values,

5. If abstinence is being taught as a primary element of the program,

6. If the local option is working,

7. If the program is being administered and taught consistently throughout the Commonwealth,

8. If the opt-out procedures had been defined, if parents are pressured not to opt-out, and if opt-out is working, and

9. Additional questions as appropriate.

The results of this study will impact students involved in the FLE program, local program planners, students' parents, and policy makers, at the local and state levels.

II. Review of Literature

In an effort to reduce pregnancy, childbearing, and sexually transmitted diseases, family life education has been given additional attention in states throughout the nation. In turn, evaluators have examined a number of family life education programs across the nation to determine the impact of school-based programs on human sexuality knowledge, attitudes, opinions, and behaviors among adolescent. The essence of national research is clear: family life education that includes accurate and age-appropriate information will increase youths' knowledge about human sexuality. Its effect on attitudes and behaviors, however, is less clear, but appears to depend largely on how, by whom, and for how long the curriculum is taught.

For schools that have as a goal helping adolescents synthesize family life education knowledge into appropriate skills and behaviors, the literature provides a number of elements believed to be essential to any school-based effort:

- Build on an abstinence base,
- Include information on pregnancy prevention,
- Build skills to say no to sexual activity or unprotected intercourse,
- Help understand why to say no,
- Start at an early age,
- Include as part of a sequential health framework,
- Use peer education,
- Promote parents as sex educators,
- Include the entire community in intervention,
- Provide direct linkages to health services, and
- Use well-trained educators in the classroom.

According to the publication Family Relations, October, 1991, Volume 40, Number 4, states can facilitate the development of family life education programs at the local level by:

- Providing a clear policy on family life education,
- Providing local communities with technical assistance to build broad-based support,
- Monitoring local districts to ensure implementation, and
- Providing funding and human resources for teacher training, and materials developed.

The ability of family life education to impart accurate and age-appropriate information about human sexuality is nearly undisputable. The promise of preventing early sexual activity and its consequences is less clear.

III. Survey Findings

The Family Life Education (FLE) survey of Virginia public school divisions in the fall of 1992 contained three parts, addressing respectively the Board of Education's regulations, administrative and legal requirements, and local policies/procedures. Questions in the first two parts of the survey sought information about school divisions' implementation and current status regarding mandatory aspects of the program, as well as certain non-mandatory aspects of the program. Questions in the third part of the survey sought information only about non-mandatory aspects of the program. The report of the survey results is organized using the same three sections as the survey instrument and items pertaining to mandates are noted.

When interpreting these results, it is important to keep in mind that 128 of the 133 school divisions in Virginia returned the survey form by the date these data were compiled. On some survey forms responses to certain questions were left blank; therefore, the number of responses is often less than 128.

Findings Related to Board of Education Regulations

Following are restatements of the survey questions related to Board of Education regulations and summaries of responses provided by school divisions.

1. **Did your division implement the state-approved FLE program or a locally-developed FLE program during the 1989-90 start-up year? (Required by Board regulation I.)**

State-approved program	46	(35.9%)
Locally-developed program	82	(64.1%)

2. **Did the options provided in the Board of Education's regulations afford sufficient autonomy and flexibility to implement the FLE program according to your local community standards and values?**

Yes	123	(96.9%)
No	4	(3.1%)

3. **Since its implementation, have you changed your FLE program from state-approved to local or vice versa?**

Yes	4	(3.1%)
No	123	(96.9%)

The changes made by the four school divisions resulted in a net gain of two divisions with state-approved programs. As

of the date of this survey, the numbers of state and local programs were as follows.

State-approved program	48 (37.5%)
Locally-developed program	80 (62.5%)

4. **Do the learner objectives your division adopted provide for age-appropriate instruction (i.e., relative to students' developmental stages and abilities)? (Required for locally-developed programs by Board regulation IV.B.12.)**

Yes	128	(100%)
No	0	(0%)

5. **Have you revised your objectives since their original adoption?**

Yes	33	(25.8%)
No	95	(74.2%)

In a follow-up question, school divisions were asked when their objectives were revised. Most of the 33 had revised them only once since their original adoption, but several had revised them each year.

6. **Which of the following content areas does your FLE program address comprehensively and sequentially? (Board regulation IV.A requires that all ten content areas be included in the FLE program.)**

Family living and community relationships	124	(97.6%)
Value of postponing sexual activity until marriage	127	(100%)
Human sexuality	127	(100%)
Human reproduction and contraception	127	(100%)
Etiology, prevention, and effects of STDs	127	(100%)
Stress management and resistance to peer pressure	126	(99.2%)
Dev. of positive self concept & respect for others	126	(99.2%)
Parenting skills	120	(94.5%)
Substance abuse	119	(93.7%)
Child abuse	124	(97.6%)

7. **Which grades are included in your FLE program? (Either K-10 or K-12 is required by Board regulations III.K and IV.B.11.)**

K-10	86	(67.2%)
K-12	40	(31.3%)
Other	2	(1.6%)

One school division indicating "other" provides FLE in grades K-8, all of the grades in that division, and the other division provides FLE in grades 5-10.

8. **Did your division establish a community involvement team (CIT)? (Required by Board regulations II.A and IV.B.1.)**

Yes	123	(96.1%)
No	5	(3.9%)

One of the five divisions responding "no" indicated that it formed a Family Life Advisory Committee; the other four divisions apparently had neither a CIT nor an alternative.

9. **If [your division did establish a CIT], what date was it established?**

Most school divisions reported establishing their CIT in either 1988 or 1989 (1989-90 was the start-up year for the FLE program). Several school divisions had CITs before 1988 and only two established their CITs after 1989.

10. **Is your CIT still active?**

Yes	50	(41.7%)
No	70	(58.3%)

11. **What date did [your CIT] last meet?**

Of the 50 school divisions reporting that their CITs were still active, only 16 reported a meeting in 1992 (the survey was conducted near the end of 1992).

12. **Indicate below the functions your CIT currently serves. (Note: The data below represents the number of school divisions indicating that their CIT serves each function, and includes some divisions which do not have active CITs. The functions have been rearranged from most to least frequently mentioned.)**

Review audio-visual materials	75
Review printed curriculum materials	73
Advise regarding an evaluation of the program	62
Recommend administrative procedures	47
Provide agency and community coordination	39
Other	21

"Other" functions mentioned more than once were providing general advice, reviewing objectives and/or the curriculum,

and developing parent programs. Board regulations require the establishment of a CIT, but do not specify its functions.

13. **Did your division establish a procedure for parents and other community members to review curriculum and instructional materials prior to the beginning of instruction each year? (Required by Board regulations III.B and IV.B.2.)**

Yes	123	(96.9%)
No	4	(3.1%)

14. **Has this [review] procedure been carried out each school year since 1989-90? (An annual opportunity is required by Board regulations III.B and IV.B.2.)**

Yes	110	(93.2%)
No	8	(06.8%)

15. **Currently, are your FLE objectives taught as a separate unit or integrated into other subjects? If part of the program is taught as a separate unit and part integrated into other subjects, check both.**

	Elementary	Middle	High School
Separate Unit	88	71	67
Integrated into:			
Health	102	110	111
Science	60	45	42
Home Ec.	3	26	48
Other	18	8	16

16. **Who has the primary responsibility for teaching your FLE program at each school level?**

	Elementary	Middle	High School
Classroom teachers	119	31	21
Health teachers	17	97	106
Home ec. teachers	2	23	40
Nurses	32	34	37
FLE specialists	17	24	21
Other	5	8	6

17. **Other than training teleconferences sponsored by the Department of Education (DOE), what pre-service training did your FLE teachers receive prior to 1989-90 (when program implementation was mandated)?**

School divisions responses to this item were classified as

sponsored either locally, by the DOE, by a college, or other. Of the 103 divisions responding to this item, eight (or 7.8%) reported no training and 14 (or 13.6%) reported DOE sponsored training only. The overall frequencies with which divisions mentioned the four classifications are as follows:

Locally sponsored	52
DOE sponsored	28
College sponsored	30
Other	11

18. Describe the inservice training your FLE teachers received during 1991-92?

The purpose of this item was to determine to what extent training was continuing for FLE teachers and who was sponsoring the training. Of the 97 divisions responding to this item, 24 (or 24.7%) reported no training and seven (or 7.2%) reported DOE sponsored training only. The overall frequencies with which divisions mentioned the four classifications are as follows:

Locally sponsored	57
DOE sponsored	10
College sponsored	6
Other	7

The comparison with data from the previous survey item is revealing. Whereas, locally sponsored training has increased slightly, all other types of training have declined since 1989-90 and almost 25% of responding divisions reported no training in 1991-92.

19. In your school division, to whom do your FLE teachers go for assistance with problems, concerns, or training needs (give position title)?

School divisions responses were classified as follows.

FLE coordinator	15
Health/PE coordinator/supervisor	17
General instructional supervisor	51
Nurse or health services personnel	13
Superintendent	3
Other	22

20. **Is [the person to whom your FLE teachers go for assistance with problems, concerns, or training needs] trained in FLE?**

Yes	97	(78.2%)
No	27	(21.8%)

21. **Which local agencies/organizations/support groups have you used as resources in your FLE program and how have they been used? Check all that apply. (Board regulations III.G and IV.B.7 require that school divisions identify and use such resources.)**

	Teach Classes	Provide Res. Matls.	Train Teachers	Other
Health department	67	108	33	3
Mental health dept.	30	68	10	1
Hospitals	13	50	8	0
AIDS support groups	15	46	11	0
American Red Cross	13	67	10	1
Planned Parenthood	2	36	2	0
March of Dimes	1	53	1	1
Coop. Ext. Services	16	54	10	1
Volunteer groups	17	22	8	1
Parent organizations	4	27	3	1
Sheriff/police	57	57	9	3
Other	14	17	14	2

All school divisions responding to this item reported using some local agencies/organizations/support groups. The groups were used primarily to "provide resource materials," it being mentioned more than twice as often as "teaching classes" and more than four times as often as "training teachers."

22. **Have you used individual medical/health professionals in the community (as distinguished from those provided by agencies/organizations/support groups referenced in the previous question) to teach the program or serve as resources? (Board regulations III.E and IV.B.5 require the use of such professionals, where appropriate.)**

Yes, to teach only	5
Yes, as resources only	41
Yes, both to teach and as resources	59
No individual medical professionals have been used	22

Of the 127 school divisions responding to this item, 105 reported using individual medical/health professionals as resources and/or to teach. One hundred divisions used them as resources and 64 used them to teach.

23. Do you have an opt-out procedure that applies to all schools in the division? (Required by Board regulations III.H and IV.B.8.)

Yes	121	(95.3%)
No	6	(4.7%)

Four divisions responding "no" gave no explanation; however, one division indicated that individual schools send out opt-out letters and one stated that a procedure would be in place in the spring of 1993.

24. Have you received complaints from parents about being pressured not to remove their children from the FLE program or difficulty removing their children from the FLE program?

Yes	9	(7.1%)
No	117	(92.9%)

Typical complaints reported by divisions were:
1. parents are made to feel guilty
2. school makes opt-out difficult and unpleasant
3. it is difficult to preview materials
4. have to go to school to complete opt-out form
5. too little time to review materials before making a decision
6. not wanting to meet with teachers to review opt-out procedure

25. Have you distributed, to all parents, information about the opportunity to remove their children (i.e., opt-out) all or part of the FLE program each year since the 1989-90 school year? (In interpreting Board regulations III.H and IV.B.8, the position of the Department of Education is that parents must be informed each year.)

Yes	123	(96.9%)
No	4	(3.1%)

Of the four divisions indicating "no," three provided additional information indicating that they are currently satisfying this requirement.

26. What percent (to the nearest tenth) of your students have been removed from all or part of the FLE program (i.e., opted out)? Provide for all years that data are available.

Data provided by school divisions in response to this item were inconsistent and/or incomplete. Many school divisions have not collected and retained data pertaining to opt outs and either provided no data or provided estimates. A large number of school divisions could not provide data on students opting out of "all" or "part" of the FLE program. Because of these problems, it was not possible to directly compile the data provided by divisions; therefore, a different approach to analysis was taken. Two analyses were performed. First, frequency counts were taken of divisions' actual or estimated opt-out percentages by interval (i.e., less than 1%, 1 to 2%, etc.) for both 1989-90 and 1991-92 and overall state opt-out percentages were estimated. For the few divisions for which 1991-92 data were missing, 1992-93 data were used. Second, each divisions' opt-out percentage for 1989-90 was compared with the percentage for 1991-92 (or 1992-93).

The first analysis showed that the estimated percentages of students opting out of the FLE program statewide were 2.2 percent in 1989-90 and 1.7 percent in 1991-92. For 1989-90, 64 of 97 divisions (or 66.0%) for which data were available reported an opt-out rate of less than two percent. The comparable figure for 1991-92 was 76 of 102 divisions (or 74.5%). The number of divisions with opt-out rates of at least five percent declined from eleven in 1989-90 to seven in 1991-92. The second analysis involved 88 divisions for which opt-out data were available for both 1989-90 and 1991-92 (or 1992-93). These comparisons indicated that the opt-out percentage had declined in 47 divisions, risen in seven divisions, and remained approximately the same in 34 divisions.

27. Is FLE content taught in sex-separated classes?

Yes	113	(89.0%)
No	14	(11.0%)

28. If [FLE content is taught in sex-separated classes], has your division developed a plan for doing so and announced it publicly each year since 1989-90? (Board regulations III.I and IV.B.9 require that such a plan be announced publicly. The Department of Education interpreted those regulations to mean that the public announcement must be done annually.)

Yes	62	(54.9%)
No	36	(31.9%)
No response	15	(13.3%)

29. During the 1991-92 school year, to what extent was FLE instruction included in the individualized educational

plan of students with disabilities? Considering all students with disabilities, it was included in the IEPs of: (Required by Board regulations III.J and IV.B.10.)

All	86	(67.7%)
Most	31	(24.4%)
Some	9	(7.1%)
None	1	(.8%)

30. **During the 1991-92 school year, to what extent was FLE instruction specified in the IEPs carried out? Considering all students with disabilities, it was carried out for:**

All	82	(64.1%)
Most	37	(28.9%)
Some	7	(5.5%)
None	2	(1.6%)

31. **Who has the primary responsibility for teaching FLE to students with disabilities? Check all that apply for both mainstreamed and self-contained students.**

	Mainstreamed	Self-contained
Regular classroom teachers	99	20
Special education teachers	39	100
Health teachers	95	36
Home economics teachers	23	6
Nurses	42	23
FLE specialists	27	14
Other	5	5

32. **Does the FLE curriculum include those sections of statutory law pertaining to sexual conduct and misconduct and legal provisions relating to family life? (Required by Board regulations III.L and IV.B.13.)**

Yes	102	(83.6%)
No	20	(16.4%)

In response to the follow-up question, "At which grade level(s) is it taught?," school divisions gave a variety of responses. Most divisions taught this content in only one or a few grade levels, while a few divisions taught it in all grades, K-12. Typically, the content was taught in the middle and high school grades, and the most frequently mentioned grades were 9 and 10.

Findings Related to Administrative and Legal Requirements

The following are the survey questions related to administrative and legal requirements and summaries of responses provided by school divisions.

33. **What procedures must be followed by an agency to obtain approval to distribute family life education materials in your schools? (The Department of Education's stated policy was that such FLE materials should not be distributed without the approval of the local superintendent.)**

School divisions had a variety of responses to this item. Some vested authority to approve in one person or group and others required approval by as many as three persons or groups. The approving authorities for school divisions are listed below in order of frequency mentioned.

School board	48
Central office administrator	26
Various committees	23
Superintendent	21
CIT	20
FLE specialist/supervisor	12
Principal	4

Four divisions indicated that they do not permit the distribution of FLE materials in the schools by outside agencies.

34. **Were all printed FLE curricula materials available for parents to review at each school in your division before the 1991-92 school year? (Required by Board regulations III.K and IV.B.11.)**

Yes	123	(96.9%)
No	4	(3.1%)

35. **If [printed FLE curricula materials were available], where were they located?**

Office	62 (48.8% of 127 divisions)
Library	83 (65.4% of 127 divisions)
Other	46 (36.2% of 127 divisions)

The percentages add to more than 100 because some schools kept copies of the materials in more than one location.

36. **Were descriptions of all audio-visual FLE materials available for parents to review before and during the**

1991-92 school year? (Required by section 22.1-207.2 of the Code of Virginia.)

Yes	109	(89.3%)
No	13	(10.7%)

37. If [audio-visual FLE materials were available], where were they located?

Office	47	(38.5% of 122 divisions)
Library	75	(61.5% of 122 divisions)
Other	32	(26.2% of 122 divisions)

The percentages add to more than 100 because some schools kept copies of the materials in more than one location.

38. Were all audio-visual materials made available to parents upon request? (Required by section 22.1-207.2 of the Code of Virginia.)

Yes	107	(95.5%)
No	5	(4.5%)

39. Of the following 14 FLE instructional topics, check the four which receive the greatest emphasis in your division's FLE program. (Note: The topic sequence has been rearranged to present them in order of frequency.)

Decision making	83
Abstinence	78
Self esteem	75
STDs/AIDS	62
Human reproduction	55
Substance abuse	53
Respect for others	52
Child abuse	18
Parenting skills	11
Stress management	10
Contraception	9
Sexual assault/rape	4
Violence prevention	3
Homosexuality	0

Findings Related to Local Policies/Procedures

The following are the survey questions related to local policies/procedures and summaries of responses provided by school divisions.

40. Has your division developed either a mission statement, program goals, or program objectives for your FLE program?

Mission statement	41 (34.2% of 120 divisions)
Program goals	77 (64.2% of 120 divisions)
Program objectives	64 (53.3% of 120 divisions)

41. What division-wide strategies did you employ in 1991-92 to involve parents in the FLE instruction of their children? What changes in strategies are planned for 1992-93?

School divisions provided narrative responses to these questions and their responses were analyzed and classified into one or more of the following:

- **Letter** to parents other than mandatory notification.
- **Invitation** to parents to come to school for a meeting, program preview, class observation, etc.
- **Send information**, e.g., objectives and newsletters to parents.
- **Parent-child** interactive activities sent to parents.
- **None** (either nothing beyond what is mandated or indeterminable).

One hundred school divisions provided interpretable responses to the first question, regarding division-wide strategies employed in 1991-92. About one-third of the 100 school divisions indicated that they were doing nothing to involve parents in instruction in addition to actions that are mandated. The frequency of their responses by classification follows (the total is 107 as seven divisions mentioned two activities).

Letter	10
Invitation	26
Send info	22
Parent-child	16
None	33

In response to the follow-up question, "What changes in strategies are planned for 1992-93?," 19 divisions gave a response which indicated that some changes were underway or being planned. None of the responses which provided specifics reflected major changes from 1991-92. Several divisions gave general responses, such as "more frequent communications from teachers" and "efforts will be made to involve parents." Sixty-five divisions indicated that no changes were planned.

42. Do you have a division-wide system for measuring your students' progress on the FLE Standards of Learning objectives?

Yes	39	(31.2%)
No	86	(68.8%)

43. Have you conducted an evaluation of your FLE program?

Yes	68	(54.0%)
No	58	(46.0%)

IV. Discussion of Findings Relative to the Study Questions

The findings presented in the previous section were further analyzed relative to the specific objectives to be addressed by this study. Following are the study objectives restated as questions and a presentation of the findings related to each question. The question numbers from Section III, Findings, are noted below to facilitate cross-reference to that section of the report.

1. Is the program being implemented according to statute and legislative and administrative mandate?

Many of the questions in the survey pertain to mandates resulting from legislation, Board of Education regulations, or Department of Education administrative policy. The following is a summary of school divisions' self-reported adherence to these mandates.

All school divisions reported they have:

- implemented either a state or local program (Q1)
- provided age-appropriate instruction (Q4)
- identified and used local agencies/organizations/ support groups as resources (Q21)
- required approval before FLE materials were distributed in schools by outside agencies or prohibited it altogether (Q33)

More than 95 percent of school divisions reported they have:

- adopted programs which cover the required grades, K-10 or K-12 (Q7)
- formed a Community Involvement Team (CIT) or an alternative committee (Q8)
- established procedures for parents and other community members to review curriculum and instructional materials prior to the beginning of instruction each year (Q13)
- established an opt-out procedure that applies to all schools (Q23)
- distributed to all parents information about the opportunity to remove their children (i.e., opt out) from all or part of the FLE program each year (Q25)
- made FLE curriculum materials available at each school for parents to review (Q34)
- made FLE audio-visual materials available to parents for review upon request (Q38)

More than 90 percent of school divisions reported they have:

- addressed sequentially and comprehensively each of the ten required content areas in their FLE curriculum (Q6)
- given parents and other community members an opportunity to review curriculum and instructional materials each year (Q14)
- included FLE instruction in the individual educational plan (IEP) of "all" or "most" students with disabilities (Q29)

More than 80 percent of school divisions reported they have:

- used individual medical/health professionals in the community as resources (Q22)
- included those sections of statutory law pertaining to sexual conduct and misconduct and legal provisions relating to family life in their FLE curriculum (Q32)
- made descriptions of FLE audio-visual materials available for parents to review before and during the school year (Q36)

Approximately 55 percent of school divisions teaching FLE content in sex-separated classes reported they have developed a plan and announced it publicly each year (Q28).

The most significant deviation from the mandates is the failure of 45 percent of school divisions teaching FLE content in sex-separated classes to develop a plan for so doing and announce it annually. More than 80 percent of school divisions are satisfying all other mandates, and 14 of the 18 mandates explored in this study are being satisfied by more than 90 percent of school divisions.

2. Is instruction designed to promote parental involvement?

Based on school divisions' responses to survey question #41, it appears that parental involvement in the FLE instruction of their children is not a high priority in many school divisions. Only 67 of 100 school divisions responding to this item indicated that they were doing something in addition to actions required by mandates. Thirty-three divisions are doing nothing extra. While two-thirds of the divisions are making some effort to involve parents, their efforts typically involve only one or a few limited activities during the school year. Examples are inviting parents to school for a meeting, sending a letter to parents, sending learner objectives or other curriculum information to parents (sometimes in newsletters which may be periodic), and an invitation to parents to observe in their child's class.

On a more positive note, 16 divisions attempt to involve parents and children in an interactive process.

It should be noted that parents have been involved in the FLE program in a variety of ways, such as serving on CITs and review committees, reviewing materials in the school prior to instruction, and reviewing learner objectives and/or curricula related to their opt-out decision. The focus of this question, though, is on parent involvement in the *instruction* of their children.

3. **Have any goals been established with regard to the above two inquiries?**

Some school divisions have attempted to provide a better theoretical base for their FLE program by developing a mission statement, program goals, and/or program objectives. These are not required and any division putting their resources into such activities did so because of their belief that they would be beneficial to the program. In response to item #40, 34 percent of the 120 school divisions responding indicated they had developed a mission statement, 64 percent had developed program goals, and 53 percent had developed program objectives.

4. **Have localities been afforded sufficient autonomy and flexibility to implement the program according to their own local community standards and values?**

Based on school divisions' responses to question #2, "Did the options provided in the Board of Education's regulations afford sufficient autonomy and flexibility to implement the FLE program according to your local community standards and values?," it is reasonable to conclude that they felt they were given sufficient autonomy and flexibility. Of the 127 divisions responding to this question, 123 (or 96.9%) responded "yes."

5. **Is abstinence being taught as a primary element of the program?**

The survey data indicate that abstinence is being taught as a primary element in the FLE program by a large number of school divisions. When divisions were asked to identify the four instructional topics (out of a list of 14) to which they give the greatest emphasis in their FLE program, abstinence was identified by 78 divisions, the second highest frequency next to decision making's 83. In contrast, contraception was identified by only nine divisions and no divisions identified homosexuality.

6. Is local option working?

School divisions' responses to several questions on the survey provide evidence that local option is working. For example:

- Given the choice of a state-approved program or developing a local program, 62.5 percent of divisions currently have locally-developed programs. Additionally, four divisions have exercised their prerogative to change their program from local to state or vice-versa since their initial election.
- Significant numbers of divisions elected to develop K-10 programs (86 divisions) and K-12 programs (40 divisions), indicating that both options were viable.
- 96.9 percent of divisions indicated that they were afforded sufficient autonomy and flexibility to implement the FLE program according to their local community standards and values.

7. Is the program being administered and taught consistently throughout the Commonwealth?

There is considerable evidence from the survey that school divisions are adhering to most mandates pertaining to the FLE program. That fact, alone, suggests that there is some degree of consistency in the most important aspects of program administration. However, there are many administrative details which are handled differently by different divisions; e.g., how their opt-out procedure works, how materials are approved for distribution in the schools, and how audio-visual materials were made available to parents.

The survey results suggest that there is great variety in how the program is taught across the state. For example:

- Some divisions teach FLE as a separate unit, while others integrate it into health or partially integrate it into science, home economics, or other subjects (Q15).
- The primary teaching responsibility for FLE is assigned to a variety of teachers, FLE specialists, and nurses (Q16).
- Those who have the primary teaching responsibility have had very different training for teaching FLE.
- Currently, the most common type of inservice training is planned and carried out by the school division, thereby promoting diversity (Q17, 18).
- Only ten divisions reported receiving inservice training from the DOE in 1991-92, the agency best able to promote

teaching consistency across the state. The comparable number for 1989-90 is 28 (Q17, 18).

Perhaps the essential question is how much consistency in teaching FLE is desirable. From an analysis of the Board of Education's regulations, it appears that a certain level of "autonomy and flexibility" is desired. The level of inconsistency reflected in divisions' survey responses is not inconsistent with what one might expect in a program based on the set of regulations which guide this program's implementation and operation.

8. **Have opt-out procedures been defined, are parents pressured not to opt-out, and is opt-out working?**

Opt-out procedures have been defined in a large majority (95.3%) of school divisions (Q23). The Department of Education has received some complaints from parents who felt pressured not to opt their children out of the FLE program, especially in the early years; however, only eight divisions reported having any complaints from parents regarding such pressure (Q 24). Opt-out appears to be working, as evidenced by divisions' responses that:

- they have adopted opt-out procedures;
- parents are notified of the procedures annually;
- few complaints from parents are being received by divisions; and
- only a small percentage of students (an estimated 1.7% in 1991-92, down from an estimated 2.2% in 1989-90) have been opted out of the FLE program (Q23-26).

9. **Are school divisions taking the steps necessary to improve their FLE programs?**

School divisions' responses to the survey are at best equivocal regarding this question. Some school divisions have gone beyond the mandates for FLE in attempts to enhance their programs. The probability that these divisions will effect program improvement should be high. For example:

- 33 divisions reported they revised their learner objectives at least once since their original adoption (Q5);
- more divisions reported sponsoring local inservice training in 1991-92 than in 1989-90 (Q17, 18);
- 41 divisions reported having developed a mission statement (Q40);
- 77 divisions reported having developed program goals (Q40);

- 64 divisions reported having developed program objectives (Q40);
- 39 divisions reported having a division-wide system for measuring their students' progress (Q42); and
- 68 divisions reported they have conducted an evaluation of their FLE program (Q43).

Some other data reflect less well on the potential for program improvement. For example:

- only 50 divisions reported that their CIT is still active (Q10);
- only 16 divisions reported that their CIT met in 1992 (Q11);
- there was less inservice training for FLE teachers in 1991-92 than in preparation for 1989-90 (Q17, 18);
- 27 divisions reported that the person to whom their FLE teachers go for assistance with problems, concerns, or training needs is not trained in FLE (Q19, 20); and
- divisions' responses indicate that the involvement of parents in the FLE instruction of their children is limited (Q41).

Appendix A
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Appendix B
Code of Virginia

§ 22.1-207.2. Right of parents to review certain materials; summaries distributed on request. Every parent, guardian or other person in the Commonwealth having control or charge of any child who is required by § 22.1-254 A to send such child to a public school shall have the right to review the complete family life curricula, including all supplemental materials used in any family life education program. A complete copy of all printed materials and a description of all audio-visual materials shall be kept in the school library or office and made available for review to any parent or guardian during school office hours before and during the school year. The audio-visual materials shall be made available to parents for review, upon request, on the same basis as printed materials are available.

Each school board shall develop and, when so requested by an individual parent or guardian of a student participating in the family life education program, distribute to that parent or guardian, a summary designed to assist parents in understanding the program implemented in its school division as such program progresses and to encourage parental guidance and involvement in the instruction of the students. Such information shall reflect the curricula of the program as taught in the classroom. (1989, c. 515; 1991, cc. 139, 526.)

Appendix C
Board of Education Regulations

FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULATIONS

I. Each local school board shall implement a program of Family Life Education subject to appropriations of the General Assembly for the costs of the program.

II. The start-up costs to local school boards choosing to implement the Board of Education's approved Family Life Education program or a program developed locally in accordance with guidelines (III or IV) approved by the Board of Education shall be funded consistent with the Appropriations Act.

III. The following guidelines shall be followed in the implementation of the Board of Education's approved Family Life Education program.

A. A community involvement team shall be identified and should include individuals such as a person from the central office, an elementary school principal, a middle school principal, a high school principal, teachers, a school board member, parents, one or more members of the clergy, a member of the medical profession, and others in the community.

B. There must be evidence of broad-based community involvement and an annual opportunity for parents and others to review curriculum and instructional materials prior to the beginning of actual instruction.

C. Those individuals selected by the localities to teach the Family Life Education program shall participate in the training program sponsored by the Department of Education.

D. A Family Life Education leader from each grade level shall be identified to assist in training individuals who will be teaching, to work with a community involvement team, and to assist in program implementation and evaluation.

E. Medical professionals shall be involved, where appropriate, to help teach the content of the Family Life Education curriculum and to serve as a resource to students and to parents.

F. Local training and follow-up activities shall involve the community in understanding and implementing the Family Life Education program.

G. Local agencies/organizations/support systems shall be identified and used as resources for the Family Life Education program.

H. An "opt-out" procedure shall be provided to ensure communication with the parent or guardian for permission for students to be excused from all or part of the program.

I. A plan for teaching sensitive content in sex-separated classes shall be announced publicly.

J. A plan shall be developed to include appropriate instruction in Family Life Education in the individualized education plan (I.E.P.) of all handicapped students.

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K. The Family Life Education Standards of Learning objectives approved by the Board of Education shall be used by the local school board. However, local school divisions may reassign the grade designation of the Standards of Learning objectives within grades K-6. The grade designation for objectives within grades 7-12 may be reassigned only one grade level, up or down. Also, the program may be adopted for kindergarten through grade 10 or kindergarten through grade 12; however, local scheduling of Family Life Education shall avoid any interruption or detraction from instruction in basic skills in elementary schools or in those courses required for graduation in the secondary schools.

L. The curriculum shall include education about those sections of statutory law applicable to instructional units relating to sexual conduct and misconduct and legal provisions relating to family life.

IV. The following guidelines shall be followed in the implementation of the Family Life Education program developed locally.

A. The Family Life Education program developed locally shall be comprehensive and sequential and include the following content areas and may include others at the discretion of the local school board:

1. Family living and community relationships;

2. The value of postponing sexual activity until marriage;

3. Human sexuality;

4. Human reproduction and contraception;

5. The etiology, prevention, and effects of sexually transmitted diseases;

6. Stress management and resistance to peer pressure;

7. Development of positive self concepts and respect for others, including people of other races, religions, or origins;

8. Parenting skills;

9. Substance abuse; and

10. Child abuse.

B. The Family Life Education program developed locally shall include and adhere to the following:

1. A community involvement team shall be identified and should include individuals such as a person from the central office, an elementary school principal, a middle school principal, a high school principal, teachers, a school board member, parents, one or more members of the clergy, a member of the medical profession, and others in the community.

2. There must be evidence of broad-based community involvement and an annual opportunity for parents and others to review curriculum and instructional materials prior to the beginning of actual instruction.

3. Those individuals selected by the localities to teach the local Family Life Education program shall participate in the training program sponsored by the Department of Education.

4. A Family Life Education leader from each grade level shall be identified to assist in training individuals who will be teaching, to work with a community involvement team, and to assist in program implementation and evaluation.

5. Medical professionals shall be involved, where appropriate, to help teach the content of the Family Life Education curriculum and to serve as a resource to students and to parents.

6. Local training and follow-up activities shall involve the community in understanding and implementing the Family Life Education program.

7. Local agencies/organizations/support systems shall be identified and used as resources for the Family Life Education program.

8. An "opt-out" procedure shall be provided to ensure communication with the parent or guardian for permission for students to be excused from all or part of the program.

9. A plan for teaching sensitive content in sex-separated classes shall be announced publicly.

10. A plan shall be developed to include appropriate instruction in Family Life Education in the individualized education plan (I.E.P.) of all handicapped students.

11. Local scheduling of Family Life Education, to include kindergarten through grade 10 or kindergarten through grade 12, shall avoid any interruption or detraction from instruction in the basic skills in the elementary schools or in those courses required for graduation in the secondary schools.

12. A local curriculum plan shall use as a reference the Family Life Education Standards of Learning objectives approved by the Board of Education and shall provide age-appropriate instruction in relation to students' developmental stages and abilities.

13. The curriculum shall include education about those sections of statutory law applicable to instructional units relating to sexual conduct and misconduct and legal provisions relating to family life.

Appendix D
Department of Education Policies

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
P.O. BOX 6Q
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA 23216

SUPTS. MEMO NO. 53
May 10, 1989

ADMINISTRATIVE

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: S. John Davis, Superintendent of Public Instruction
E. B. Howerton Jr., Deputy Superintendent for
Curriculum, Instruction, and Personnel Services

SUBJECT: Family Life Education

Enclosed are a recent Attorney General's opinion on the opt-out regulation and responses approved by the Board of Education on April 28, 1989 to questions frequently asked about the following Family Life Education issues:

-Opt Out
-Role of the Community Involvement Team
-Implementation Deadline
-Compliance

Family Life Education regulations stand alone; i.e., they are independent of other Board regulations. Therefore, parents will not have to justify their requests for their children to be opted out of any part or all of the program. We have made further inquiry to our attorney regarding subjects required to be taught by statute (referenced in the opt-out issue).

Community Involvement Teams have been diligent in their work during this planning year, and we strongly encourage you to keep this team involved during the first year of program implementation. They can keep communication open between the schools and the community during this critical period.

On the enclosed form please indicate your school division's plan for implementation of Family Life Education during the 1989-90 school year. If you need technical assistance from the Department of Education or have questions, please contact Mrs. Lois Harrington at (804) 225-3488.

SJD/EBHJr/js

Enclosures

Mary Sue Terry
Attorney General

H. Lane Kneedler
Chief Deputy Attorney General

COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

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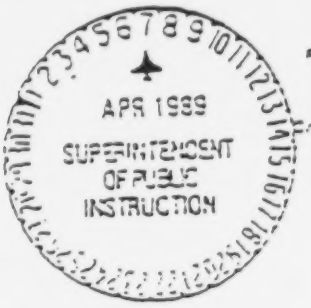
Deborah Love-Bryant
Executive Assistant

March 31, 1989



The Honorable Stephen H. Martin
Member, House of Delegates
P.O. Box 34147
Richmond, Virginia 23234

My dear Delegate Martin:

You ask whether the "opt-out" provision of the *Family Life Education* guidelines adopted by the Board of Education permits a parent or legal guardian to absent their child from all or any part of the Family Life Education program, and not just those parts of the program deemed to be sensitive by a local school board.

I. Applicable Statute and Guideline Provision

As required by § 22.1-207.1 of the Code of Virginia, the Board of Education developed standards of learning and curriculum guidelines for a comprehensive, sequential family life education curriculum in the public schools of the Commonwealth. *See* Board of Education, *Family Life Education* (rev. March 1988) (the "*Guidelines*"). These *Guidelines* are required to be implemented by local school divisions in order to meet accreditation standards. *See* 4 Va. Regs. Reg. § 7.21, at 2831 (August 29, 1988).

The *Guidelines* expressly require that "[a]n 'opt-out' procedure shall be provided to ensure communication with the parent or guardian for permission for students to be excused from all or part of the program." (Emphasis added.) *See Guidelines* § III(H), at xv.

II. *Guidelines* Provision Applies to All or Part of Family Life Program

The "opt-out" provision of the *Guidelines*, quoted above, clearly and without exception authorizes a parent or legal guardian to excuse his child from all or any part of the Family Life Education program. It is my opinion, therefore, that this provision permits a parent or legal guardian to absent their child from all or any part of this program and not just those portions of the program deemed to be sensitive by a local school board.[1]

---

[1]This result also is in accord with the letter you have received from E. B. Howerton, Jr., Deputy Superintendent for Curriculum Instruction and Personnel Services, Virginia Department of Education (March 24, 1989).

Supreme Court Building · 101 North Eighth Street · Richmond, Virginia 23219 · (804) 786-2071

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With kindest regards, I am

Sincerely,

Mary Sue Terry
Attorney General

6:57/297-082

ISSUES DOCUMENT - FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION
MARCH 30-31, 1989

ISSUE I - DEFINITION OF OPT-OUT

QUESTION:
May localities limit opting out to certain portions of their Family Life Education program (e.g., the areas they identify as sensitive, topics already in the instructional program)?

SUGGESTED RESPONSE:
The Board of Education regulation on opting out states, "An 'opt-out' procedure shall be provided to ensure communication with the parent or guardian for permission for students to be excused from all or part of the program." This allows parents the opportunity to have their children excused from all or any part of the curriculum that is included in the Family Life Education program required by the Board regardless of the discipline in which it is taught unless otherwise required by statutes.

ISSUE II - ROLE OF THE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT TEAM

QUESTION:
What should be the role of the Community Involvement Team (CIT)?

SUGGESTED RESPONSE:
The Board of Education expects local boards to approve the composition and role of the community involvement team and the manner in which the school authorities and teams work together. The Board of Education does not approve or disapprove the membership and role of the community involvement team.

ISSUE III - IMPLEMENTATION DEADLINE

QUESTION:
Are there circumstances under which a locality would be permitted to delay implementation of the Family Life Education program beyond the fall of 1989?

SUGGESTED RESPONSE:
The Board of Education **Guidelines For Training Individuals Who Will Be Teaching Family Life Education** state that the program "will be implemented in the school year 1989-90."

In the survey of community involvement team leaders in January 1989, the question was asked , "To what degree do you feel you have the support of your team for implementing the program during 1989-90?" Results indicated that, even with time pressures, 113 teams support the 1989 implementation schedule. Of the remaining nineteen teams, five of them want only one more year to develop their programs.

The Department of Education believes that, though school divisions are pushed to accomplish this task, the momentum is there with significant community involvement and support. For those localities having difficulty meeting the schedule for implementation, the Department of Education is prepared to provide the technical assistance they may need to comply with the schedule.

ISSUE IV - COMPLIANCE

QUESTION:
What will happen if a school division does not implement a Family Life Education Program?

SUGGESTED RESPONSE:
Since the Family Life Education Program is required by the Accreditation Standards, which are included in the Standards of Quality, enforcement proceedings, which are coercive rather than solely punitive, could be initiated under Section 22.1-253.13:8 of the Code of Virginia.

COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
P.O. BOX 60
RICHMOND 23216-2060

MEMORANDUM

TO: Special Education Directors

FROM: Dr. William L. Helton, Administrative Director of Special Education, Pupil Personnel and State Operated Programs

RE: Family Life Education and Special Education

DATE: April 6, 1989

In response to the inquiries received by staff in the Division of Special Education, the following questions and answers are provided for your information:

Is Family Life Education required of all students in special education?

Yes. Family Life Education is required of all students in Virginia's public schools, including all students in special education.

Will any handicapping categories be automatically excluded from Family Life Education?

No. The components of Family Life Education are appropriate for all students with handicaps, as modified to their handicapping conditions and learning styles. Careful consideration should be given to those students with severe disabilities. The Severely Handicapped Technical Assistance Centers can serve as resources to school divisions engaged in the decision making process regarding such students.

Handicapped students of preschool ages will not be required to receive Family Life Education until they reach kindergarten or first grade, when Family Life Education begins.

Who will teach Family Life Education to students in special education?

Students in special education will receive instruction by the teachers in either the regular or special education classroom, dependent upon the decision of the IEP committee.

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How should Family Life Education be included on the IEP?

Family Life Education should be treated like any other content area. The IEP committee should determine if Family Life Education should be taught in the regular education environment, or in the special education classroom. If it will be taught in the regular education environment, modifications required for appropriate instruction should be identified and placed within the IEP, in the same manner these modifications would be addressed for any other content area. If taught in the special education classroom, the goals and objectives should be based upon the SOLs adopted by each school division, with modifications as appropriate to the student's handicapping condition.

Will parents be able to opt-out of Family Life Education?

Yes. Parents may opt-out of all or part of Family Life Education. This may be addressed by using the same procedures for opting-out that is used for non-handicapped students and attaching to the IEP or including a section on opting-out of Family Life Education on the IEP.

How does opting-out of Family Life Education impact on graduation?

Refer to the local school division's policy for the impact of opting-out for non-handicapped students.

Will there be a special education Family Life Education curriculum?

No. the Family Life Education curriculum adopted by the school division should be used, with appropriate modifications for stucents in special education. Materials directed toward the unique learning needs of certain students with handicaps are available commercially. School division personnel requiring such materials should carefully review these and make a selection as appropriate to the needs of the students.

Where can we get assistance?

Contact your local Family Life Education planning team for assistance in integrating special education into the local Family Life Education Curriculum. Contact Lois Harrington at the Virginia Department of Education for information related to Family Life Education requirements.

Contact the Special Education Technical Assistance Supervisors for information related to IEP protocol.

WLH/gn
cc: Ms. Lois Harrington LEA Contact Persons for FLE

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